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STATE FOR I/RF, PA/PR/FPC/W, IIP/G/EA, EAP/PD, R/MR,  
EAP/J, EAP/P, PM;  
USTR FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE;  
TREASURY FOR OASIA/IMI;  
SECDEF FOR OASD/PA;  
CP BUTLER OKINAWA FOR AREA FIELD OFFICE;  
PACOM HONOLULU FOR PUBLIC DIPLOMACY ADVISOR

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: OITP KMDR KPAO JA

SUBJECT: TOKYO MEDIA REACTION - PAKISTAN MOSQUE SIEGE

LEAD STORIES: Most Wednesday morning papers front-paged the continuing fighting between Pakistani army commandos and rebel Islamist clerics at the Red Mosque in Islamabad.

¶1. "Mosque Siege: Breeding Grounds for Terrorists Should Not Be Neglected" An editorial in the top-circulation, moderate Yomiuri commented (7/11): "What effect will Pakistan's difficult decision to use force against Islamist militants at the Red Mosque have on its shaky internal political situation and the fight against terrorism? The international community should keep a close watch on what Pakistan does next.... President Musharraf had initially taken a 'carrot and stick' approach to the clerics and their militant followers. He hardened his stance, however, after learning that there were many wanted terrorists connected with al-Qaeda among those holed up in the mosque. With the world's attention focused on the situation there, Musharraf apparently took action in the view that a failure to do so would have subjected him to withering international criticism. Even so, some observers have attributed the incident to a lack of leadership on Musharraf's part. In Pakistan, madrassas have served as a breeding ground for terrorists in recent years, instilling in their students anti-American sentiment and a belief in jihad...."

SCHIEFFER